

Mrs PRIME

By ALAN COPPS

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solicitor, doctor and from her parents and all said she should hand over the evidence.

She informed the police first of what she had found and secondly of her husband's confession.

She said: "I took legal advice and I had a choice. I didn't have to do it. But morally I had to go to the authorities and tell them because I could not live as a Christian with that on my conscience and I believe in the end I have done him a favour, and hopefully, the country."

Mr George Carman O C (defending) asked Mrs Prime how her husband had reacted to the fact that she had provided the prosecution with its evidence.

"He has taken it incredibly well. He has become a changed man—the man I always thought was always underneath."

"He has lost all his burden and is now a new man. Because of the terrible burden he carried for so many years he was incredibly unhappy. He was a tortured personality."

Mrs Prime said her husband was now able to "relate to people" and had made a close friend in prison.

"I believe for the first time Geoffrey Prime has found the goal in his life that he was always seeking," she said.

Mrs Prime, who was later praised by the Lord Chief Justice as "a woman of great character, sympathy and humanity," said her husband had treated her and her three sons with the "utmost respect."

She did not know how he did it while living his "triple life."

He had been a marvellous father to the boys.

"He has worked very hard and brought me to a standard of living I would never have had without him."

Before calling Mrs Prime, as a character witness, Mr Carman said she had received approaches from the national Press offering "enormous sums of money."

But she took the view, as a practising Christian, that it would be immoral to make a profit out of her husband's treachery.

"She expressly asked me to say that after she had given evidence she would very grateful if the Press would leave her and her family alone," he said.

After giving her evidence Mrs Prime returned to her seat at the side of the court and listened as the Lord Chief Justice sentenced her husband.

Then, seconds after he had been led away, to the cells, she collapsed in tears and was helped out of the court by a policewoman.

Some time later, looking calm and composed she left the Old Bailey by a side entrance and was escorted to a taxi by police.

With her was Father Adrian, the parish priest from her local church, who had listened to the trial from the public gallery, and another woman friend.

Later it was learned that she had had a 15-minute meeting with her husband in the cells.